

## The Times-Dispatch

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1912.

## THE FEE SYSTEM AND ECONOMY.

If the General Assembly is to do its duty consistently, it will at this session pass some measure partly, at least, destroying the fee system and substituting therefor a reasonable salary plan of compensating those public officers who now are rich and grow fat on fees. It is idle to prattle about economy here and economy there, and get never alter a system so obviously a drain on the people and so outrageously extravagant. A salary system, equitably applied, would put money in the public treasury and cut out a source of immense waste.

There is a lesson for the legislators of Virginia in the experience of Guilford county, N. C. There the fee system of compensation has been done away with and a salary basis substituted with telling effect. Auditor Abbott has just completed the financial statement of the county referred to, in which he shows that, during the fiscal year ending December 1, 1911, the county saved, by the abolition of the fee system, the sum of \$12,771.92. Prior to the establishment of the salary and auditing system this amount would have been calmly pocketed by the fee officials. The total receipts from all offices were \$28,072.72; the disbursements and salaries required \$15,300.80. The balance is to be credited to the school and road funds, so that the schools will get \$2,605.42 and the roads \$10,016.50. The saving in the previous year, 1910, was \$10,293.11, showing a decided gain for the year 1911, and a total saving for two years of \$23,065.03.

Illuminating, is it not? Guilford county is a somewhat well-to-do county, but there are many counties in Virginia far richer. A little more than \$12,000 saved in one year—think of it! Just one North Carolina county gives \$2,605 to schools and \$10,016 to the public roads in one year through this economy! Why shouldn't this money be devoted to the schools and roads in Virginia counties? As it is, the schools and the roads go begging, and the money which they might have is snarled up in the capacious pockets of fee officials who do not need it, because they, without it, would still receive an excellent compensation. This shows strikingly that the fee system is the people's loss. What better illustration could there be of the wastefulness of the fee system? At the present rate, Guilford county in less than ten years will have \$100,000 by its action in abolishing the fee system; in Virginia that \$100,000 will go into the bank for the private use of officials of no especial efficiency and of negligible public service.

The General Assembly can put a stop to this graft system. Your legislator can help you. Mr. Citizens, and you ought to write to him and tell him that you desire this infamous extravagance stopped. Where, O where are the Senators and Representatives who last summer advocated so strongly the abolition of the fee system? What are they doing about it? Why are the county press silent? Why are the people dumb? Why talk of saving when a thing like this is allowed to stand?

Why hasn't the fee system been abolished? The answer is easy. The legislator fears to oppose the fee officials in his county; he is afraid of their influence, afraid of them in some cases; he is putty in their hands. So the question resolves itself into this: The interest of the officials at home or the interests of the voters at home? A word from home to the legislator about this will count. Our Confederate pensioners justly protest that they have not enough to live on but our good, comfortable, well-off friends, the county and city fee officials make no such outcry. If the overall fee officials of this State were put on a salary basis, the saving would doubtless be enough to give the veterans what they want. At any rate, the generous General Assembly of Virginia pays the men who attend their lives for the State a mere pittance, while it lavishes untold wealth upon county officials who have done little or nothing for the State and who, in some cases, take the money and let their clerks do the work.

A general abolition of the fee system seems impracticable at this time, but there is no reason why the General Assembly should not at this session enact legislation placing all overlaid city and county fee officials on a salary basis. What are you going to do about it, gentlemen of the Legislature?

## A POINT FOR POLYHOLDERS.

House Bill No. 166 on the calendar with Judge Martin Williams as its patron, should be given the closest scrutiny and study before it is enacted. It has for its purpose a change in method of protecting Virginia polyholders in insurance companies doing business in this State, by permitting bonds in surety companies to be given in lieu of the State, city and

county bonds now required to be deposited with the Treasurer of Virginia for the protection of the public.

The withdrawal of the State and local bonds would be likely to cause a decline in values of Virginia Securities, because of decreased demand. Such bonds are now in favor for this purpose because they are non-taxable and are bought by the insurance companies to make the deposits required by law. But, in addition to this, the safety of the policyholders must be safeguarded. The difference would be that between having the money in one's pocket and in having a bond of some guaranty company—doubtless entirely safe under ordinary circumstances. But let a time of great national depression come, and the result might be different. The recent failure of the Virginia Safe Deposit and Trust Corporation, of Alexandria, which has paid no return premium to its bond patrons, is a case in point.

## YUAN'S COMPROMISE REPUBLIC.

If Yuan Shi-Kai succeeds in evolving order out of the Chinese chaos, preventing partition of the empire, establishing a stable government acceptable to all factions, and averting years of internecine strife, he will have achieved one of the greatest triumphs of constructive statesmanship in the world's history. Yet this, according to latest advices, there is the promise of his doing by means of his "compromise republic," in default, that is, of the near-plotting of outside influences.

Than Mr. Yuan no man was ever confronted with a more difficult problem of mediation. From the beginning of the development of the Chinese disturbances into a revolution, the question of the way out, save through anarchy or dismemberment, has revolved around him. He has been the embodiment of the storm center, and been literally between the devil and the deep sea. Of course, a republic in China, conforming to the Occidental idea, is little, if any, short of grotesque. But the essence, "a republicanism," has existed in the Chinese masses for centuries, and has demonstrated itself in various ways. The true Chinese, the people of the middle kingdom, have for ages exercised in large measure self-government—been accustomed in large degree to local home rule. Notwithstanding, and despite the imperial sway and absolutism of Peking, each of the eighteen provinces of China proper has presented the anomaly of asserting and enjoying a certain independence.

Though an imperial appointee, the Viceroy has frequently openly opposed the policy, and even the mandates of the court, and while ostensibly an autocrat in himself and absolute within his territorial jurisdiction, has at the last been really subservient to the influence of the popular will. For example, no viceroy would dare to readjust the rate of taxation without consulting the leading men of his province, lest the taxpayers should determine to preserve the status quo by resort to the convenient process of assassination. Peking edicts none the less against these conditions—against the dictates of the middle kingdom innate and traditional democracy—the throne has been impotent to contend, especially since they have been buttressed by powerful secret societies embracing true Chinese from the highest to the lowest classes.

On the one hand, Mr. Yuan had to face the fact that the revolution had assumed the status of a concrete organized, militant, practical exposition of this middle kingdom democracy. Its indefinite and scattered integers were only awaiting the meeting of the man and the hour, and these met in Dr. Sen. On the other hand, he was confronted with the factor of Manchu autocracy and its traditional, intense and uncompromising loyalty thereto. This situation—this antagonism—presented a menace of dissolution, apart from partition by the powers, through the secession of Manchuria, a step, it is no secret, some of the foreign interests have been covertly urging. To harmonize the two elements was the task before Mr. Yuan, and his "compromise republic" concept is the result of his labors and negotiations.

The plan in general is a dual order under which the republicans would institute some form of representative government—republican system of administration and executive control—while the dynasty, surrendering centralized power, would retain its sacerdotal office and the right of conferring titles. Thus both sides would save their faces, a consideration dear, almost sacred, to every Chinaman. Whether the scheme will prove workable remains to be seen. But unquestionably it should have the benefit of the doubt, seeing that perhaps no other living man knows the workings of the Chinese mind better than does Mr. Yuan, and no other living man appreciates more fully than the great opportunist the capacity of his fellow countrymen for assimilating innovations. The point is, however, that there seems every reason to believe that the experiment will be tried, and that for the present at least, has eliminated the issue of one side trying to conquer the other, and the danger of a protracted, devastating civil war.

The only remaining question is, will the powers interested in partition encourage the experiment and hand off, until it has had a fair trial, or will they, especially Russia and Japan, continue to stimulate Manchurian opposition and disaffection, and foster Manchurian sense of humiliation to the end of rendering interference in duty to civilization and humanity? There's the rub!

## AUTO FOR GOVERNOR MANN.

Simultaneously with The Times-Dispatch, the Petersburg Index-Appal and the Newmarket News Daily Press

urged Governor Mann yesterday morning to veto the resolution resubmitting the amendment giving indefinite tenure to city treasurers and commissioners. Doubtless more would have joined in the request were it not for the fact that only a small number of newspapers in the State have posted themselves thoroughly on this intricate constitutional matter.

The Newport News Daily Press remarks that "there are five gentlemen in the Senate of Virginia whose votes were cast against the officeholders' trust yesterday," and declares with pride that Senator Saxon W. Holt was "one of the immortal five." Continuing, our contemporary says:

"Thirty-four Senators cast their votes in the interest of the officeholders' trust, and unless Governor Mann vetoes the measure, and that is what he should do, the people must vote again on an issue which they decisively defeated less than two years ago. 'There has been no demand for another election on this question from any source save the officeholders' trust. Certainly the people were not clamoring to vote on the issue. They had decided for what they supposed to be for once and all time, and were surprised when it was brought up again.'"

Even if the Governor signs the bill, the Daily Press cannot understand how it will benefit the treasurers and commissioners of the cities, for "heretofore" to amend the Constitution it has been necessary for the General Assembly to pass a resolution at one session, publish it and repass it at its second session and submit it to a vote by the people. If this course is followed—and it is the only lawful course that can be followed—the amendment will not be voted on until 1914, before which time city treasurers and commissioners will have gone out of office. The Daily Press perceives that the only thing this General Assembly can do with the amendment is to begin it all over again. "Any effort of the component parts of the officeholders' trust to ride roughshod over the Constitution will be unavailing, for the people will rise up and block it at the polls."

The Index-Appal declares that the Senate has "voted to ride roughshod over the Constitution of Virginia" and has recorded itself "in favor of illegally amending the State Constitution." Moreover, in this instance, "the few commissioners and treasurers in this cities have proved themselves more powerful than the State Constitution." Then says our contemporary with much force:

"What are you going to do about it, Governor Mann? Are you going to prove a friend or foe to the Constitution of the State of Virginia?"

"A vote cast at the hands of the Governor would fasten the eyes of the people on the State Legislature. It would throw a searchlight onto the proceedings of that body. Only five men dared to defy the mandates of the treasurers-commissioners. Would that many dare defy outraged public sentiment and vote for the passage of a resolution over the Governor's veto?"

"It is doubtful. But whether they would or not is a matter entirely beyond the control of the Governor. However, others may regard the Constitution. It is his duty to see that it is upheld. His veto is confidently expected by all who believe that he holds that document binding and who believe he knows the nature and meaning of an oath to uphold it."

It is to be most seriously doubted if more than a handful of members of the General Assembly inquired into the constitutionality of this measure. Few read any cases or texts in connection before making up their minds, and there are a great many members who are not lawyers and who would not, in the nature of the case, understand the constitutional questions involved unless they were fully thrashed out in discussion. Such debate was not had in the House; in the Senate there was presented preponderant evidence as to the unconstitutionality of the act. The measure was regarded in its political rather than its constitutional light. Governor Mann will doubtless keep these facts in mind. In 1910 it was he who proclaimed the passage of this amendment by the people. No question was then made of its contravening the Constitution. An interval of two years of unbroken silence passed without a murmur as to the validity of the amendment. It was not an issue in the campaign last summer. The constitutional point was not raised until the General Assembly convened. The officeholders' trust knew full well that the smaller the publicity given to this measure, the briefer the discussion and the better the chance of its passage. The whole matter requires reconsideration, and Governor Mann could not err in recommending this measure to the General Assembly.

One of the North Carolina newspapers persistently claims the great men of the world as Tarheels, and must suffer the consequences. The Memphis Commercial-Appal refers to the Hon. Asbury Ferdinand Lever as a "distinguished North Carolina Congressman," and transit gloria South Carolina.

The bill to prevent the shooting of elephants in Goodland should be passed without delay, so that the General Assembly can get down to work.

William Jennings Bryan is making a profit of \$100 the acre on new cabbage on his Texas farm. It looks as if he is going out of the lemon industry.

When our affairs and firesides are to be protected, Delegate Love, of Lunenburg, is always on the job. 'Twas he who sounded the tocsin against suffrage.

Now that equal suffrage is settled, gentlemen of the General Assembly, let us return to our muttons—especially those which are assessed too low.

What is a Governor without his staff?

A few more winters like this, and overcoats will be only a memory.

Does Roosevelt want three of a kind?

## On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

Adam.  
Take off your hats to Adam, for he was a lucky man;  
He never had to eat stale fruit out of an old tin can.  
He simply had to sit dead still. The fruit fell from the trees  
Whenever the garden was bestirred by any vagrant breeze.

Old Adam never had to dodge the sixty-horse power car;  
There was no bill collector there, his joy in life to mar.  
He never had to listen to a lot of argument  
About the man who wanted to become the President.

He had no fear of microbes, for they camped not on his trail;  
The law never worried him a bit, because the statutes were no jail.  
He owed no tailor's bill, because he didn't dote on style.  
The cost of living was a joke at which he well could smile.

He worried not about the trusts nor yet the power of wealth.  
There never was a single thing the matter with his health.  
He had no furnace fire to stoke and no hard coal to buy.  
The climate in the garden was as balmy as July.

There was no squawking phonographs to interrupt his sleep.  
There was no barber shop quartets to sing, "Down in the Deep";  
No canvassers for books dropped in to occupy his time.  
Old Adam must have led a life that simply was sublime.

## Caught on the Fly.

J. P. Morgan is to take a trip up the Nile. If he likes the Nile he may buy it and put it in Central Park.

A Connecticut scientist claims that men can live for years as if dead. Sure, most Connecticut men do.

A trade report says shoes are going up. Yes, indeed, it is very slippery these days.

The suffragette situation in England is said to be growing serious. Yes, indeed, the suffragettes are getting so they can throw straight.

But what if they do wipe out gambling in Chicago? People can go over to St. Joe, Mich., and get married.

It is evidently going to take more than a bicycle pump to keep Champ Clark's boom inflated.

Mme. Thebes says Paris will be entirely destroyed in 1912. It will make but little difference here, because most of the genuine Paris hats are made in this country, anyhow.

Mrs. Quinby claims to be the first American aviator. Maybe, but she is not the first American woman who has been flighty.

Mr. Rockefeller says he isn't worried about the outcome. No, indeed, he has always been the outgo that worried him.

A taxicab company in New York has gone into bankruptcy, thereby following in the train of most of its patrons.

## Some Leap Year Hints.

One good way to land him is to have your life insured for \$10,000 and make him the beneficiary.

Buy one of those \$10,000 bungalows and a sixty-horse power Panhard and let him know that you own them. Take him out riding in your car once in a while.

Take him to the theatre often, and always provide a nice chummy little supper afterward. If you continue these little attentions long he is almost sure to accept you.

Don't forget the bouquet of violets when you send him the invitation to the theatre. You can get one for \$1.50.

Buy one of those \$10,000 bungalows and a sixty-horse power Panhard and let him know that you own them. Take him out riding in your car once in a while.

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## Some Seasonable Hints.

In extremely hot weather one should not exercise until he perspires and then sit in a draft. When playing lawn tennis great care should be taken not to be overcome by the heat. Take a little rest occasionally by lying in the grass.

A person can keep reasonably cool in a houseboat on the river, or take such weather as this. A cool, refreshing night's rest on a houseboat gives one strength and ambition for the day's work.

## Voice of the People

Politics and Business.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—I will try and see if you can read my writing again, and to make sure of it, I will abuse W. J. Bryan a little. Wilson says he had knocked him into a cocked hat. He wants his (Bryan's) endorsement now. But Bryan is not a pensioner. Your man, Harmon, is following Wilson to Richmond, and how those neither fish nor fowl Democrats of Richmond will split their throats applauding him! Give all the bankers, insurance and

brokerage men choice seats, with their Prince Albert coats, and their (which it is now) fuzz or beaver hats, an array of talent, the know-all! But slip up when you think we country people are all fools. How much does the tariff affect that ilk? But how they do howl about that rolling stock tax. First, posing as being imposed upon, and made to pay \$10,000 more taxes to the State than all the counties together, when at the same time they are receiving back that amount, or more in taxes they are not entitled to, and say as well for Richmond to tax my wagon when it carries a load of their own goods, and to create monopolies on selling the load? Don't your stable men get stabled on those mules? Don't your catling house get paid for dinners, too, and the bar men sell us drinks? And don't they pay taxes in Richmond? And does not your city charge a tax on every car that backs up to your market? Don't you get all the taxes on all the fertilizer and chemicals in the State, or practically all who have made millions of dollars (out of, I suppose, the streets and parks of your city)? But their generally go to country post-offices.

Now I will take in hand your agents, not merchants. There is not a merchant in the city of Richmond. They are all agents with their districts laid out by the manufacturers. So that if I wish to buy a binder or a threshing machine it's no use of my trying this or that house. Into whichever one I go I have fallen into the great net of the harvester corporation; there to be indicted to the amount of \$50 more on one machine than these people sell the same machine for in these foreign countries where they raise what to compete with my wheat here (I won't say anything about my wheat in raising this wheat, because you city people think the wheat grows and threshes and puts itself on the market, while the lazy old farmer whistles sticks and talks politics. He should go to work).

This brings us back to politics again. There is Mr. Taft prosecuting trusts, first pulling out all the slings of the law, turning loose a wasp with his latter part amputated, and the children to play with. And now the bill is in array. Shall we have this doctor of wasps, Mr. Taft, or that doctor of wasps (who will suit the Richmond class of Democrats), or that great doctor who will not advocate the prosecution of trusts and then pack the court, and then write to "My Dear Mr. Harmon, or My Dear Mr. Bryan" and hold jollification meetings with the fellows he is prosecuting?

Remember dear Mr. Parker, and Palmer and Buckner, and quit preaching tariff. You make some of your readers wonder.

Tunstall.

## Mr. Royall on the Sherman Law.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—I have sent to United States Senator Moses E. Clapp, chairman of the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce, the inclosed letter, which I ask you to print.

If the Sherman law had contained the suggestions which I make when it was originally passed we would never have had any troubles with the trusts. Why it did not contain them I cannot imagine, except that it is one of the most bungling pieces of legislation ever enacted, framed by men who had no comprehension whatever of the great politico-economic principles they were dealing with.

WM. L. ROYALL.

A Dear Sir—I ask the committee to accept the following as a supplement to the statement I made to it on November 25, 1911.

The Sherman law should be amended according to the following suggestions: In dealing with this subject it must never be forgotten that what we call trusts are not the ordinary corporations, grown very rich and powerful, and the same laws that are applied to other corporations must be applied to them.

The trusts are to be divided into two classes:

(1) Those which operated before and continued to operate after the law is amended according to what follows.

(2) Those which go into operation after the time of the amendment.

(A) Those which operated up to the coming amendments must be left in possession of whatever they have

## NOT ENTIRELY HARMONIOUS IN THE DEMOCRATIC CAMP.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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